India

FOR THE

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NOTES AND NEWS.

BETTER late than never! We learn that the Report of the Famine Commission, presided over by Sir Antony MacDonnell, is in the printers' hands, and will be issued about the end of this month as a Blue-book. It is understood that a Deputation will present the Memorial of the Indian Famine Union to the Secretary of State for India shortly after the meeting of Parliament in January.

The North Lambeth Liberal and Radical Association has selected Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji as the Liberal candidate for the division, by 66 votes against 59 recorded in favour of Mr. W. Wightman. We understand, however, that the selection is not final until ratified at a subsequent meeting by at least a two-thirds vote of the members then present, and thereafter confirmed by a public meeting called for that purpose. We hope the Liberals and Radicals of North Lambeth will do themselves the honour of ratifying and confirming the present vote, and will eventually send Mr. Naoroji back to Parliament, where the cause of India so much needs his services.

The Viceroy has a strong backing of reason in his refusal to encourage hopes of railway extension from Burma to India on the one side and to China on the other. There is large scope, as he pointed out, for projects tending to the internal development of Burma, while in the meantime the sea is an ample carrier. "I would sooner," said Lord Curzon, "see this flourishing country overspread with a network of lines bringing the waste lands under cultivation, increasing the population, developing security, and expanding trade, than I would push out tentacles into the unknown." This "flourishing" country? Well, there is still vast room to satisfy the full meaning of the epithet.

We entirely agree with the "Manchester Guardian" (December 10) that one part at least of the duty of Liberals in the future, with regard to North-West Frontier proceedings, is "to see that excellent principles are not whittled away in practice, and to ensure a logical and systematic application of them." The duty is sufficiently difficult and exacting. But we strongly suspect that our contemporary is too sanguine in believing that "the present policy of the Indian Government on the frontier is in all the main essentials the policy of the Liberal Opposition in the debates on the last war." It is true that Lord George Hamilton, writing to the Viceroy (January 28, 1898), said that "the two main objects to be borne in mind" were "the best possible concentration" of our military force, and "the limitation of your interference with the tribes so as to avoid the extension of administrative control over independent tribal territory." Next year, too (August 8), Lord George said he had "summed up that despatch in two words by saying that the principles it represented were concentration and conciliation." Again, he said (July 26, 1900): "Two principles have been laid down for the regulation of our North-West Frontier policy: one is the substitution of levies and local militia for British-Indian troops, and the other withdrawal from cantonments outside the administrative frontier." And on the last two of these occasions he lauded Lord Curzon's vigorous prosecution of this policy. But there are other considerations germane to the matter.

In 1897 (August 5)—an earlier date than the declarations already cited—Lord George Hamilton stated that "there is only one method by which the tribes along our Indian frontier can be permanently weaned from their old malpractices, and that is to so improve their material condition that they will not risk the advantages they have thus gained for the mere fun of fighting." And he pointed to the alleged advantages of the opening of the Malakand-Chitral road. This is in consonance with his tenacious insistence on the maintenance of roads and communications, which he has not, so far as we know, in the least relaxed; and, in fact, beyond this, we still maintain outposts in tribal territory, a list of which was given by Lord George Hamilton (March 28, 1901), in answer to a question by Mr. Herbert Roberts. We also direct special attention to Lord George's answer to Mr. Roberts on March 15: "There were in 1898 no military outposts maintained on the North-West Frontier outside the boundary of the Durand delimitation, and since the ratification of that agreement the line so defined is held to be the external frontier of British India." Now what does that mean? Take it in connexion with the dissenting Minute of Sir Charles Pritchard, Sir James Westland, and Sir Antony MacDonnell (the essential points of which we quote elsewhere), and can it be regarded—by the tribesmen, at any rate—otherwise than as a distinct aggression on their independence? Surely, this is "Forward" policy, if there is such a thing anywhere. Besides, the restraining influence of the Punjab Government is now removed, and war or peace depends on the Viceroy directly —a Viceroy subject to the permanent influences of official, and especially of military, opinion, and not always so independent as Lord Curzon. The recent special articles in the "Times," too, show how hard it is for any Viceroy to withstand this opinion. The Forward Policy is by no means dead, though temporarily it is restrained by the personal aspirations of Lord Curzon, and by the emptiness of the exchequer.

Mr. W. W. Wall, writing in the "Investors' Chronicle" for December, asserts as roundly as if he were in the centre of the inner ring of officialdom that "in spite of plague and famine India stands now in a position of greater prosperity and promise than she has occupied for many a year past." This pernicious nonsense is based on the figures of imports and exports, and of revenue, without any apparent reference to the facts of the life of the people upon which the value of such figures depends. An ample revenue might consist with a much decreased prosperity, and the immense excess of exports over imports might well suggest to a financier some penetrating inquiries as to the material condition of the population. Mr. Wall does, indeed, deviate into sense in the following passage:—

> In spite of surpluses the Indian Government seem bent on borrowing, and their intention thus to burden the country unnecessarily is strongly to be deprecated. They have every inducement and encouragement to be economical, and if they will but act judiciously in that respect, they will be able to place the country in so strong an economic position that it will be able more calmly to face the ravages of plague and famine.

We trust, however, that the Government will not face these calamities "calmly," but with a vigorous determination to extirpate them and to take measures for preventing their recurrence.

In the "Bombay Government Gazette" of November 21, there appears the defence of the Government of that Pro-

vince to the charges brought against it by the Famine Commission. It begins by regretting that the Bombay Government did not appoint a Commissioner to sit with the others and watch the evidence to see where explanations should be offered, though not to "assist in the preparation of the ultimate report." On this the "Times of India" unkindly observes:—

If the Local Government had no more to say to the Commission than they have said to the Government of India, in explanation of their policy, it is difficult to believe that the conclusions embodied in the Report would have undergone material alteration.

Their excuses are in some cases only a repetition of the accusations.

To the charge of not being prepared a double and somewhat contradictory defence is offered. They were not ready in Gujerat because it was so long since that region had suffered from famine. In the Deccan they were not ready because the region had been severely afflicted in the famine of 1896-97, and another could not be expected so soon. Each defence may be sufficient in itself, but they certainly read curiously when placed together. And the "Times of India" makes two quotations of a rather awkward kind. The first is from the Deccan Agriculturists' Relief Commission which reported that on an average out of three seasons one was good, one middling, and one bad. So the Government might well have been forewarned. The second quotation deals with Gujerat, and is taken from this very Report itself; for it is there asserted that the relations of the Collector "with his subordinate officers are so close that nothing abnormal should long escape his notice, and there is no chance of any distress occurring without his having had an opportunity of preparing for it." Yet the Government was taken unawares in Gujerat.

According to the Code, the dole should be distributed in the presence of village committees, but the Collectors declare that these will not assert themselves, and are no check upon dishonesty. This is intended as an answer to the Commission's view that more use should have been made of non-official agency. In that respect it may—at a stretch—serve. But the "Times of India" is surely right when it characterises this as "the most damaging indictment of the past policy of the administration" in its relations with the rural population of the Presidency. Our contemporary asks:—

What have we been doing? We have broken up the village community and substituted in its place rent-takers, who recognise none of its obligations and would perform none of its duties?

The ruin of the village community is itself a sufficient condemnation of the revenue system of the Bombay Government.

As regards two points, the Bombay authorities succeed to some extent in shifting the blame from themselves to the Government of India. Accused of being niggardly in their relief during the earlier stages of the famine, they reply that they considered themselves bound by the Government of India's circular of December 27, 1899, in which the necessity of economy in relief expenditure was inculcated. To the Commission's condemnation of the minimum wage of nine chataks, except by way of punishment and for a short time, they reply that this was intended by them only as a punishment wage and was sanctioned by the Government of India on that understanding. They therefore claim that they do not deserve the censure of the Commission, and whatever censure is due to them must be shared by the Central Government. On this the "Times of India" sensibly remarks that a wage, whether it be called penal or not, is really a minimum, when a considerable part of those at the relief works earn no more. Besides, "economy" does not mean pinching.

To the view of the Commission that the land assessment of the Deccan is a full one, the Government of Bombay opposes the high value which land bears there. The Bombay authorities offer, if the Government of India approve, to introduce a system by which the demand will vary with the crop; but they protest that this would violate a cardinal principle which has hitherto always been kept in view—that remissions of land revenue should not be granted in surveyed districts, and that "one of the principal objects Government had in view when sanctioning the revision of assessments was the doing away with the necessity of making abatements save in years of unusual scarcity. . . . Indeed the Government should be so moderate as to enable the cultivators to accumulate funds sufficient to pay the assessment in years of more than average failure." (October 5, 1847.)

With just pride Indian officials point to the small mortality due directly to privation in the districts that suffered by the last great famine—small, that is, in comparison with the extent of the crop-failure. But there is another side to the picture. There is only too much reason to fear that the indirect effects of famine were much more deadly than was thought, though the census returns point in the same direction. From the Report of the Surgeon-General on the Mofussil Civil Hospitals and Dispensaries we get an insight into the indirect effects of famine. In the Presidency 175,837 more cases of fever were treated during 1900 than during 1899. Of these no less than 59 per cent. were in Gujerat.

The Commissioner of Settlements and Agriculture, dealing with the traffic of the Central Provinces as carried by railway, draws attention to some effects of the Famine. For the first time in the history of the Provinces, the bulk of the imports has been greater than that of the exports. The exports of wrought brass and copper increased from 2,500 maunds, the average for previous years, to 19,519 maunds in 1897-98, and still amounted to 14,936 in 1900-1901. This, of course, was due to the sale of their household vessels by the unfortunate people. As, however, the imports, even apart from food-grains, actually increased, it would appear that the liberality of the Government which was so marked in these Provinces during the last famine was not without good effect. The "Pioneer" remarks:—"It is clear, however, that several good harvests will be needed before the Province can regain its former position as a grain exporting country."

The collapse of the export of wheat which the Commissioner fixes upon as the most remarkable feature of the trade of the Central Provinces began long before the recent famines—in fact it dates back for ten years. In the last seven years, the exports have not exceeded two and a half million maunds a year, while the yearly average used to be eight million maunds. In fact the bad seasons date from an earlier period than the last two famines, and the area sown with wheat is now only fifty per cent. of what it once was. As the people do not consume the wheat themselves, this at first sight would appear no great loss. In a region so frequently visited by famine, it would seem of the first importance that the cultivators should grow food for themselves. But since India is bound to export in order to make payments in Europe, the diminution of the export of any one article means that she must either force a greater quantity of some other article on the market, and so reduce its price, or else must plunge deeper and deeper into debt.

The concessions in the matter of assessments granted to the Madras rayats in April last have now been followed by others relating to the Forests. It was a serious grievance that the Forest Reserves were often so close to the cultivated lands that no ground was left for communal purposes, and, in addition, the villagers' cattle often strayed into the Forests, for which the unfortunate owners were mulcted in heavy penalties. Sir Arthur Havelock admitted that there was great room for improvement in the Forest regulations, and the present Governor of Madras, after his first tour, ordered Mr. A. W. B. Higgins, of the Board of Revenue, who has had great experience as a Forest Settlement Officer, to make an investigation. Several concessions, according to the "Madras Mail," have now been made to the rayats, the chief being that the boundaries of the Forests have been set back wherever they were close to wet land.

Another grievance of the rayats' was the system of contracts for thatching grass and leaves for manure. There was a tendency for the whole contract to get into the hands of one man, who having thus a monopoly could impose his

own terms on the rayats. The system brought in very little money, and has now been abolished. Moreover, under certain restrictions grazing for goats is to be allowed, these animals having been hitherto totally excluded from the Reserves; and timber may in future be obtained for the making of purely agricultural implements. It is very satisfactory to find the Government of Madras so open to the representations of the people, and so ready to meet their wishes.

Miss Sarola Devi Ghosal, B.A., has revised and reprinted from the journal of the Mahabodhi Society for July and September "A Scheme for an Indian Girls' School." She introduces her proposals with a plea for the necessity of such an education as she suggests—a plea addressed to her own countrymen and countrywomen, and laying special stress on the grounds of family happiness and national progress. At present the schools for Indian girls are mainly on the lines of boys' schools, and Miss Ghosal would go a certain way in the same direction but would differentiate at the Matriculation standard. Her scheme has for one of its chief objects "to revive some of our decaying national arts and industries," "especially those that will be of daily use to the girls in their future domestic life." So the girls are to be taught quilt-stitching, flower-embroidery on saris, the finer fancy-work (as well as plain needle-work), carving stone-moulds for domestic purposes, drawing and painting, singing and playing (especially on the national sitar), cooking, sick-nursing, the study of the English language, and so forth. There is to be "no sectarian religious instruction," but "the religious ideas and moral principles contained in the Gita, the Upanishads, the Puranas, the Hindu epic poems, and Buddhist gâthâs will be inculcated by means of daily readings and recitations." The idea is to provide for the requirements of Bengali girls by an institution in Calcutta, which could be imitated elsewhere by similar institutions with local modifications. Miss Ghosal is the daughter of Mrs. Swarna-Kumari Ghosal, the foremost lady-writer of Bengal. We wish her project all success.

A movement was started (July 19) under the auspices of the Hindu Ladies' Social Club, Bombay, for the establishment of "The Women of India's Memorial to Mr. Mahadeo Govind Ranade." It was recognised how heavily the cause of female education and female social reform lost by Mr. Justice Ranade's death; and it was felt that "his unceasing and disinterested devotion to raise the intellectual, moral, and social status of the women of India" should be commemorated in some permanent form. The particular form or forms were not to be decided upon till the fund had been collected. A large and representative committee of ladies was appointed. We have not yet heard the results, but we trust that the project will be carried out promptly on a scale worthy of the distinguished and devoted Ranade.

An Anglo-Indian correspondent writes:—"The Treaty rights and political autonomy of the Indian States and Principalities have been undergoing an intermittent and silent process of denudation and erosion since—say, the period of that gorgeous Imperial Durbar at Delhi, when, paradoxical as it may seem, the Princes and Chiefs were, for the first time, invited to take part in the Councils of the Empire. One minor form of these insidious nibblings has recently come into notice. This is by way of the Paramount power proposing to assume control over first one and then another of the seaports within the domains of independent States—such as those on south and west of Kattiawar or Kutch. No doubt similar octopus feelers will stretch towards the larger ports on the Malabar coast. Of course some pretext can easily be invented in the secrecy of the irresponsible Political Department, which has its confidential emissaries, small or great, in each of what we are pleased to call the "Protected" States of India. What more plausible than for the Indian Government to plead the excuse to protect its own customs revenues against smuggling? One method is very mild, namely, to propose to take over the revenue management of such ports on lease and by "mutual consent." It should be sufficient answer to this puerile but patent device to remark that, even if the Chiefs cannot be trusted for their own sake to use their own coast guards, the Indian Government has its own cordon of salt-wardens and other revenue officers on the inland side of all these seaboard States.

"The new 'Voice of India' has been drawing attention to this very 'small game,' which—with generous respect for the still new Viceroy—it is careful to remind us, 'was started under a previous regime.' These insidious encroachments may already have gone further than is generally known; and the more so if they have been pushed in the peculiarly mean fashion hinted at in this sentence:—'No worse political blunder could well be conceived than that of acquiring territorial or other rights from a Prince [or his State] during his minority, or when he is unable or unwilling to cede his rights . . . . a divorce between diplomacy and honour.' We would fain hope that no such unworthy breach is being made in the noble and genuinely Imperial compact devised by the sagacious Sir George Clerk and Lord Stanley, of that period, so frankly proclaimed in handsome terms by Lord Canning in 1858 as his grand healing policy after the Great Revolt. But we must confess to disquieting doubts in this regard: for no close observer can be unmindful of the lurking and continuous tendency towards transferring the 'allies' of that period into helpless 'vassals' during recent years."

The Liberal Publication Department (in connexion with the National Liberal Federation and the Liberal Central Association), 42, Parliament Street, S.W., has just issued in a single handy volume its "Pamphlets and Leaflets for 1901" (price 2s.; post free 2s. 3d.). The May meeting of the National Liberal Association at Bradford is reported; there are four speeches by Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, Sir W. Harcourt's great Finance speech, Mr. Morley's two speeches at Arbroath and Forfar, and Mr. Asquith's Hotel Cecil speech on the Mission of Liberalism; together with articles on such subjects as finance, trade, and education. The volume is a most convenient repertory for the use of politicians, and ought to be very widely circulated, especially in connexion with Liberal associations.

Messrs. Longmans have published a handsome volume on "The Oriental Club and Hanover Square," by Alexander F. Baillie, F.R.G.S. (price 25s.). Hanover Square was begun as late as the year 1718, and it is curious to read Strype's contemporary statement that "it is reported that the common place of executions of malefactors at Tyburn shall be appointed elsewhere . . . . for removing any inconvenience or annoyance that might thereby be occasioned to that Square, or the houses thereabouts." Yet the desiderated change does not seem to have taken place till 45 years later. The Square was, of course, named after the House of Hanover, whose first representative, George I, had just ascended the throne, in 1714. The Oriental Club, instituted in 1824, arose to meet the needs of returned servants, military or civil, of the East India Company; for Company officers, on furlough or retirement, lost their military grade, and were not eligible to any military club, and the civilians naturally went with them to their new special club. The personal histories recounted here are full of varied interest. The photogravure portraits—Sir John Malcolm (frontispiece), Lord Metcalfe, the Marquess of Hastings, Lord Clive, Warren Hastings, and Major-General Stringer Lawrence (the first Commander-in-Chief in India)—as well as the other illustrations, are admirable.

Remittances on India for 60 lakhs were on Wednesday offered for tender by the India Council, and applications amounting to Rs.7,51,00,000 were received at prices ranging from 1s. 3d. and 15-16ths to 1s. 4d. The following amounts were allotted—viz., in bills, Rs.29,34,000 on Calcutta, and Rs.13,26,000 on Bombay at an average of 1s. 3.968d., and Rs.16,11,000 on Madras at an average of 1s. 3.969d.; and in telegraphic transfers Rs.1,29,000 on Bombay at an average of 1s. 4d. Tenders for bills at 1s. 3d. and 31-32nds and for transfers at 1s. 4d. will receive about 8 per cent. Later the Council sold bills for Rs.45,000 on Madras at 1s. 4d. Last week remittances for Rs.60,46,424 were sold for £402,337, making the total disposed of from April 1 to Tuesday night Rs.14,78,51,134, producing £9,825,651. Next week 60 lakhs will again be offered.

THE JUDICIAL COMMITTEE.

LAST week we expressed our grave disappointment with the new representation of India on the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, and to-day we might well content ourselves with reproducing a leading article on the general subject which appeared in these columns just two years ago (December 22, 1899). In spite of the dissatisfaction, professional and popular, throughout India, and in spite of the attempt of Government to reorganise the Court of Final Appeal from India and the Colonies, we stand to-day precisely in the position we occupied two years back. That is to say, we have not advanced a single inch towards a remedy; but it may further be doubted whether the maladroit diplomacy of Mr. Chamberlain and his insolent subjection of India to the results of Colonial opinion have not postponed the Indian remedy for many more years to come. We showed from the official figures that the interests of India are more important than those of all the self-governing colonies together. We showed from official documents that these colonies are quite satisfied with the existing arrangements, whereas India is profoundly dissatisfied. Yet, in face of these uncontested facts, and in face of Mr. Chamberlain's own admission of "the importance of the matter to the interests of India," the final decision was placed on the opinion of the Colonies, and no attempt apparently is to be made to remove the grounds of Indian dissatisfaction. The appointment of Sir A. R. Scoble indicates mere persistence in the vicious system that has caused the mischief in the past. Nor is there any indication that the Secretary of State for India has taken any steps, or intends to take any steps, to safeguard "the interests of India" in this profoundly important matter.

The case is just as simple as it is important. The Judicial Committee stands there to hear appeals from Indian judicial decisions, and therefore it ought to be competent, in point of judicial ability, to perform the duty laid upon it. No one—not even the Government—would think for a moment of contesting these propositions. But Indian legal and popular opinion regards many of its decisions, over a wide range of departments of law, as not merely unsatisfactory, but as absolutely subversive of large principles of Native law and usage. It is well known that individual Indian judges have been so shocked by the vagaries of such decisions that they have deliberately refused to follow them, until formally compelled by resolution of the local judicial Bench, under stress of the technical principle of subordination to the highest constitutional authority. And even then the local Bench has not followed the Privy Council without protest. Retired judges, free to speak their mind, have marshalled specific examples and uttered the strongest condemnation: we have already referred to the powerful articles of Sir W. Comer Petheram and Sir W. H. Rattigan in the "Law Quarterly Review," 1898-1900. This is no case of racial or political perversity, or factitious fault-finding; it is a purely professional protest against a purely legal course of blunders. Nor can it be said that no great practical harm has resulted, and that the Native views of law can readily accommodate themselves to the new channels traced by the Judicial Committee. Sir W. H. Rattigan says of one of the new doctrines that "there was every reason to believe that it was VIOLENTLY OPPOSED TO THE DRIFT OF POPULAR FEELING." Sir W. Comer Petheram, having illustrated the practical abolition of the special distinguishing features of the Mitakshara joint-family system, says this:—

> Nothwithstanding the decisions of the Courts, the Mitakshara joint undivided family, with all its immemorial usages, customs, and laws continues and will continue to be the system under which Hindus, over by far the larger part of India, regulate and will continue to regulate their lives and fortunes. Meanwhile the law of the Courts differs from the law of the people, and this has caused MUCH MISERY AND RUIN, and has also in its own way tended to foster a feeling of DISTRUST AND DISCONTENT.

Babu Golapchandra Sarkar, too, an experienced Calcutta Vakil, stated in 1897 that "by the operation of the doctrine introduced by the Privy Council in GIRDHARI LALL'S case"—which converted a purely religious and social into a strictly legal liability, and a legal liability of a much wider application—"many ancient families are becoming ruined and reduced to poverty." Now, why should all this moral and material mischief—incontestable in point of fact—be worked upon our hundreds of millions of Indian fellow-subjects, when the remedy is so simple and so obvious? That remedy, as we have over and over again insisted, is the appointment of a Native Indian—or, better, two Native Indians, a Hindu and a Mahometan—to inform the Judicial Committee authoritatively as to the facts and as to the law. Till this be done, the action of the Privy Council on Indian Appeals can be regarded only as a scandalous denial of the statutory rights of our Indian fellow-subjects.

Two years ago the "Times" itself (December 14, 1899) discussed with much frankness and good sense the necessity of "the strengthening of the Judicial Committee." It deplored the loss of those "two jurists who had great weight in the Colonies," Lords Herschell and Watson; by the word "jurists," putting its finger surely upon the essential qualification. It mentioned the common allegation or hint "that the Judicial Committee is needlessly prone to decide appeals on small secondary issues, and too much afraid to lay down broad principles"—a point that is open to ready illustration in Indian cases. It further said: "the judges of last resort know the documents; they do not know much more." Such an incisive criticism, coming from such a quarter, might have been expected to stimulate the Government to action. But the other criticisms to which we have referred probe the question still more deeply, and in essence they are quite as authoritative as the "Times." The judges may know the documents in the sense that they have the documents before them; but what does that matter if they are incapable of appreciating their true meaning? As we have already pointed out, it is impossible to read the documents with intelligence unless one has somehow become saturated with the atmosphere in which they were penned. For the interpretation of English documents English judges are prepared by their habituation to the English atmosphere. For the handling of Colonial documents they are less prepared; but the difference is not great, and at any rate, in the meantime, the Colonies "are not dissatisfied." But for the construction of Indian documents they are as far from being prepared as East is from West. Here comes in the necessity and value of the assistance of special experts in Indian law. The results in the hands of Sir James Colville, Sir Barnes Peacock, and Sir Richard Couch, all ex-Chief Justices, we have seen. Where, then, is the hope that a fresh leaf has been turned by the appointment of Sir A. R. Scoble? Any such hope would be nothing less than self-delusion. The true and plain remedy is denied; the mischief is left unabated and unheeded, but none the less oppressive, and even politically dangerous.

We say "oppressive" because of the "much misery and ruin" caused and to be caused by the conflict of the law of the courts with the law of the people. We say "politically dangerous" because this conflict causes, and will continue to cause, not only misery and ruin, but also "distrust and discontent," and because it trenches upon tender questions of religious observance or social habit. We remark also that these ominous results are in direct violation of statute—the statute that provides for the administration of Hindu and Mahometan law in India in accordance with the laws and usages of the Hindus and the Mahometans. "Both Hindu and Mahometan law," says Sir W. Comer Petheram, "may be roughly described as consisting of the precepts of the sages as interpreted by the customs of the people, and every one who has had experience of India knows that instances constantly occur when it is difficult, if not impossible, to ascertain from books what the customs of the people in some particulars are." Such difficult cases are just the cases most likely to be appealed; and they are just the cases in which the Privy Council is least likely to be provided with the necessary means of sure guidance. We are most unwilling to suppose the Privy Council capable of contemptuous or even headstrong inconsiderateness. But it seems worth while to recall a particular case referred to by Sir W. Comer Petheram, without going so far as to suggest that it is typical. It is the case of a Bengali will, which came before a Bench of the Calcutta High Court several years ago. The Bench consisted of an English barrister judge and a Bengali Hindu judge of about a dozen years' standing. After careful examination of the original will, the Bengali judge concluded that the English Court translation did not accurately represent the Bengali

document. Another Bengali judge of the Calcutta High Court, on reference, came to the same conclusion as his colleague. On this reading of the will by two judges of the High Court, whose native tongue was Bengali, and who were both experienced lawyers, the clause of the will in question was declared void. The Privy Council, on appeal, reversed the judgment. Sir W. Comer Petheram says: "They treated the English translation as the will, and, construing it by the rules of construction which English judges apply to English documents, they said that the testator did not by his Bengali words mean what the Bengali judges thought he did." "It is not surprising," adds Sir Comer drily, "that such a decision has not been received with enthusiasm in India." This case has nothing to do with ignorance of facts or of law; it shows a pedantic technicality of a pettiness all but incredible. Referring generally to the obnoxious decisions, Sir W. Comer Petheram says "it seems probable that confidence in the tribunal can never be re-established among the Natives of India until those decisions have been reversed in some way, and the law of the courts again brought into accordance with the law of the people." It seems more than probable that the mischief and the scandal would never have occurred if India had been represented in the Judicial Committee by Native Indian jurists picked from the first rank of the Bench or the Bar.

TROUBLE IN WAZIRISTAN.

THE heather in Waziristan seems to have at last caught fire. It would be rash to fix a time when the Waziris were not turbulent or restless, but no less rash to assert that a British thrashing has ever done them—or us either—any good. The last invasion in force—the progress which the late Sir William Lockhart made through the Mahsud country—was simply futile in a political or military sense; but it furnished a good market to the "friendlies" who came in to our camp, and it sowed bitterness in the hearts of the people whose dwellings and belongings were destroyed. Early in the present year serious operations against the Mahsuds were talked of, as they are talked of now. It is about a twelvemonth since they were laid under blockade till they should pay a fine of a lakh of rupees. That fine has been but partially and fitfully paid, and, according to the "Standard's" special correspondent at Simla, "payment was mostly made either in the shape of sheep, previously looted from our territory, or in old guns, offered and taken at an inflated value"—a process of settlement that could hardly tend to elevate the Waziri conception of our commercial or political capabilities. "Latterly," the correspondent adds, "payment in rupees was insisted on, with the result that contributions almost entirely ceased." Probably enough, the Mahsuds find rupees scarce: rupees are scarce even down in the plains. During the past month, the British troops have taken to counter-raiding; we hear of four columns—4,000 men—at work. Now one of these columns has been roughly handled, sustaining the loss of 10 men killed and 15 wounded. This may not seem surprising, but it has raised the usual cry for another punitive expedition.

Of course, if you come into my land with a large body of troops, burn seven of my villages, blow up seven of my towers, and capture 200 or so of my people, I kill and wound your men as fast as I can. Thereupon the primal spirit of revenge, casting about for a respectable and popular guise to cover its native and conscious ugliness, seizes the blessed word "prestige" and exclaims lustily. Witness the said Simla correspondent:—

> In short, our PRESTIGE, that most valuable of assets in the East, is suffering, and has for some time suffered, through our dealings with the Mahsuds. And if the tribesmen, who are now looking on with great interest, see that such an attack as this [at Sarwekai] is not replied to by forcible action, there can be little doubt that our PRESTIGE will still further decline.

That nasty affair at Sarwekai was a Mahsud "attack." Yes, but why were our people surveying there—at any rate without a clear understanding with the Mahsud leaders, or with a certainly overwhelming force? The thing is to get down to the bed-rock of offence. Why on earth can't we let these people alone? Curiously enough, there are some of us who boldly and roundly maintain that we are as innocent as babes, and that the Mahsud Waziri are double-dyed with the sin of aggression. Listen to the "Daily Mail" (December 9):—

> No attempt has been made by us to interfere with their tribal freedom; they can allege no real grievance against the British Empire; but they are by nature fond of plunder and war, and to satisfy their predatory instincts they have from time to time directed raids against the settled districts inside our frontier. Such conduct could not be tolerated, etc., etc.

Our contemporary has a fertile fancy, if he is blankly ignorant of the facts. It is right "Imperialistic" to exclaim against a violation of OUR frontier and to be amazed that other people should object to our interference with THEIR frontier.

The fact, of course, is that we have not merely attempted to interfere with the freedom of the Mahsud Waziri, but actually done so; and that they can allege a very real grievance—the Durand boundary-posts and British forts within their territory. Apparently it is necessary for us once more to recall three or four sentences from the dissenting Minute of Sir Charles Pritchard, Sir James Westland, and Sir Antony MacDonnell, on the last Waziristan expedition, in the teeth of which Sir Henry Fowler sanctioned that deplorable blunder and futility, since which there has been continuous trouble with the Waziris. The Minute ran thus:—

> It is noteworthy that almost all the Waziri offences enumerated in the list attached to the despatch were committed on or near the portion of the Waziristan border which marches with the Zhob district recently annexed to Baluchistan. If these offences may be regarded—and we think that, to some extent at all events, they may reasonably be regarded—as evidence of irritation felt by the Waziris at the advance of the British frontier in that direction, then the inference is that much greater irritation will be felt at the establishment of military posts inside Waziristan, and still more at an advance to the boundary of Afghanistan.
>
> It is evident that the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab does not anticipate any great difficulties IF OUR ESTABLISHMENTS ARE KEPT WITHIN OUR PRESENT FRONTIER LINE, AND IF, AT THE SAME TIME, DUE PRECAUTIONS ARE TAKEN TO PREVENT THE PROVOCATION OF COLLISIONS WITH THE TRIBESMEN AND TO MODERATE THE ARDOUR OF THOSE OF OUR CIVIL AND MILITARY OFFICERS WHO ARE EAGER FOR AN ADVANCE.

Now that the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab has no voice in these matters, it is to be hoped that Colonel Deane will "moderate his ardour" and not signalise the inauguration of his new province with another futile expedition. We have a more confident reliance, however, on Lord Curzon's objection to having his plans upset, and on that usually gloomy object of contemplation, the empty treasury at Calcutta.

The pressure on the Viceroy may be estimated from the talk about prestige. The demoralisation induced in certain circles by a "crisis" of this sort may be gathered from some remarks of the "Standard's" special correspondent at Simla. This correspondent acknowledges that "the chief argument against an expedition is that expeditions have proved futile in the past." He does not argue the question of right or wrong in the matter: with him there is no question but the Mahsuds are in the wrong. But though expeditions have proved futile in the past, he has a recipe for carrying them out in the future "in the proper manner." Thus:—

> We ought to have nothing to do with supposed friendlies, but warn them not to approach our camps, and treat every tribesman as an enemy while the expedition lasted. We should pay for absolutely nothing, but take our provisions and forage wherever we found them. We should hang half a dozen of the principal Mullahs, the real instigators of all the treacherous attacks and assassinations which take place on the frontier. We should make the tribesmen feel that we really were at war, and not on a charity-distributing expedition. . . . . A force of ten or twelve thousand men would be ample to round them up, and the whole affair would be finished within three months.

This looks a nice programme for a Christian country with some remaining shreds of respect for the law of nations. The writer calmly designates the Mahsuds "scarcely human bandits." If we did as he suggests, how would the opinion of the civilised world designate us? The memory of the Tirah campaign, however, is still fresh on the official mind, and will, it may be hoped, not be without its restraining influence. And, after all, as the three able Anglo-Indian statesmen above cited plainly indicated, can't we let these tribesmen alone?

OUR LONDON LETTER.

WESTMINSTER, Thursday.

Public interest in the affairs of India has received a stimulus this week in the unwelcome form of an addition to the war news of the day. War and famine are usually represented as twin plagues, but, after all, it is war alone that touches the imagination of people at home. The stimulus is one that most of us would be glad to dispense with. Passers-by, the other day, glanced with unconcealed disgust at a newspaper placard bearing the ill-omened words, "England's New War." One of the evening papers turned the occasion to account by saddling Sir Henry Fowler with responsibility for the rising, and was in turn promptly rebuked by a contemporary for betraying Pro-Mahsud-Waziri tendencies. But the public resents these ill-timed pleasantries. We have already one war too many on our hands and can see nothing attractive in the invitation to embark on another.

Politicians are still looking before and after, and sighing for impossibilities. The Opposition appears to be solidifying, but some of it remains in a condition of excessive fluidity. What the Liberal Imperialists want can only be surmised. They are filled with a vague yearning, which leaves them inarticulate. A perusal of their speeches conveys the impression that they have lost confidence in the Government, but are overwhelmed with admiration of the Government's policy, that they are eager to enforce Liberal principles, but would rather die on the veldt than support the Liberal leaders, and that they think the country is being ruined by the war, and can only be saved by preventing peace. Altogether, their attitude is a trifle perplexing, and busy people are no longer trying to understand it. Meanwhile, the main stream of Liberalism, as Mr. Morley foresaw nearly a year ago, is beginning to flow more and more steadily in the direction of compromise. When Parliament opens, strong pressure will be brought to bear on the Government to compel a re-opening of negotiations.

What will Lord Rosebery say? The question is becoming tedious, but a topic that is on everyone's lips could scarcely be ignored without affectation. Happily, the suspense of an agonised universe will soon be relieved. The epoch-making deliverance is due on Monday. Lord Rosebery is nothing if not dramatic—it would be disrespectful to say theatrical—and with the true histrionic instinct he has guarded his secret alike from friend and foe. Unkind critics hint that he himself is scarcely less in the dark than anybody else as to what the fateful day will ultimately bring forth. The event, at least, will probably show that an error of judgment was committed in the announcement of the performance so long beforehand. Expectation has grown in the interval to a preposterous height, and when the prophet comes down from his cloud-capped peak his descent may be of a two-fold character.

Much concern has been caused by the action of the War Office in withholding the monthly returns of mortality in the Boer concentration camps. At the time of writing, the statistics for October and November are unpublished, and the inference is generally drawn that the high death-rate recorded in September must have been greatly exceeded. In any event, the policy of secrecy is most unwise. It arouses suspicion both at home and abroad, gives rise to the atrocity stories with which the Continent has been ringing, and, by stifling all voluntary effort to introduce ameliorative measures, tends to aggravate the original evil. Apologies and explanations, like those of Mr. Brodrick and Lord Onslow, are not enough. The true remedy—especially against misrepresentation—is that recommended nearly two years ago by Mr. John Ellis—a constant stream of facts.

One of the advantages of celebrating the coronation about the end of June will be the addition of a holiday to the British calendar. The gap between Whitsuntide and the first Monday in August is too wide; a stepping stone has long been demanded. In future years the vacancy will be supplied by Coronation Day, an anniversary which the King, it is believed, means to signalise by making it the occasion for the annual distribution of honours hitherto associated with the Sovereign's birthday.

Among the applications to the Court of Claims by various personages who are eager to play a part in the Coronation ceremonial, not the least interesting is that by the boys of Westminster School to have a place set aside for them at the service in the Abbey. The desire of those juveniles will doubtless be gratified. For generations past the boys of Westminster have represented no less important a constituency than the whole British people at the ceremonial of crowning the Sovereign. "Sirs," says the Primate, at a crucial part of the service, "I here present unto you King Edward, the undoubted King of this realm. Wherefore, all you who are come this day to do him homage, are you willing to do the same?" The boys, as representatives of the people, then signify their willingness and joy, according to the ancient rubric, by loud and repeated acclamations, all with one voice crying out "God save King Edward." This quaint ceremonial is a survival of the earliest Saxon days, when the Sovereign was presented to the assembled people in order that the latter might record the national approval of the chosen King.

Politicians and the lions of society have rarely been so cruelly satirised as in the inimitable collection of caricatures which Mr. Max Beerbohm is showing this week at the Carfax Gallery. Hitherto, "Max" has been better known as a writer than as an artist, but henceforth he will enjoy a double notoriety. Some courage must have been required on the part of a "Saturday Reviewer" to depict, under the title of "Lord Salisbury leading the nation," the bowed back and shoulders of an obvious valetudinarian; or to exhibit publicly such a scathing satire on latter-day Imperialism as is here embodied in the audacious series of cartoons representing "John Bull as he really is." Society and the Jingoes have decided to join in the mirth of the satirist, but the laughter, perhaps, is a little forced. There have even been hints of a repartee of brickbats.

Playgoers have been renewing their youth at the Savoy Theatre since last Saturday, when "Iolanthe," one of the most tuneful and witty of the Gilbert and Sullivan series of operas, was revived after an interval of more than eighteen years. Not a single member of the original cast reappeared in the performance, but curiously enough some of the incidents of the first production were repeated, fortuitously. For example, the Fairy Queen, like her predecessor in 1882, found herself confronted by "Captain Shaw" in person when she came to address her amorous invocation to that "type of true love kept under," and, as on the first occasion of the singing of the melody, Sir Eyre Shaw, to the vast amusement of both stage and auditorium, was enabled to bow his acknowledgments from the stalls.

CHRONICLE OF THE WEEK.

THURSDAY, December 5.—The Prince and Princess of Wales were entertained by the City Corporation at the Guildhall in celebration of their return from their Colonial tour. The route from York House, St. James's, was gaily decorated, and thronged with spectators, who accorded the Prince and Princess a warm reception. The Corporation presented an address of welcome, to which the Prince briefly replied. Luncheon was then served in the Banqueting-hall to nearly 900 guests. The Prince, acknowledging the toast of his health, described the recent tour as unique in its character, rich in the experience gained, and in memories of warm and affectionate greetings from the many races of his Majesty's subjects in his great dominions beyond the seas. The Princess and he had travelled over 45,000 miles, of which 33,000 were by sea, and with the exception of Port Said, they never set foot on any land where the Union Jack did not fly. After recapitulating the principal events of the journey, the Prince said that, if asked to specify any particular impressions derived from it, he should unhesitatingly place before all others that of loyalty to the Crown, and of attachment to the old country—feelings which he should venture to attribute to the life and example of the late Queen, and to the wise and just policy which during the past half-century had been continuously maintained towards the colonies. He warmly commended the establishment of cadet corps in Australia and New Zealand, and mentioned the impression which seemed generally to prevail in the colonies that "the mother country must wake up" if she intended to maintain her old position of pre-eminence in her colonial trade against foreign competitors. Lord Rosebery, in proposing the toast of "The Colonies," testified to the way in which they had rallied to the cause of the Empire, and hoped that one result of the Royal journey would be to make the bond which united that Empire more cementing, more systematised, and more business-like

than at present. He coupled with the toast the name of Mr. Chamberlain, who, he said, had brought to the duties of his office an energy, an industry, an ability, and, above all, a sympathy that were invaluable. Mr. Chamberlain, in responding, contrasted the state of the colonies now, and of their relations with the mother country, with the conditions which prevailed when the King, as Prince of Wales, visited Canada 40 years ago. On the motion of Lord Salisbury, thanks were accorded to the Lord Mayor and Corporation for their hospitality.

The Rt. Rev. Dr. Welldon, having resigned the Bishopric of Calcutta, was appointed a Canon of Westminster.

A Pretoria telegram announced the capture of three Boer laagers, with 250 prisoners.—The concentration camps in South Africa were the subject of an interpellation in the Second Chamber of the Dutch States-General. The Foreign Minister stated that the Government could do no more than see that the relief sent to the people in the camps reached its destination.

According to the Constantinople correspondent of the "Times," the Mecca garrison had mutinied from want of pay. Money was at once despatched.

The Tokio correspondent of the "Times" reported that the Marquis Ito's visit to St. Pétersburg was regarded by the Japanese Press with complete indifference.

FRIDAY, December 6.—There was published correspondence that had passed between the Committee of the International Peace and Arbitration Association and Mr. Brodrick on the case of Miss Hobhouse. The Committee asked by what authority and on what grounds Miss Hobhouse was refused permission to land in South Africa, ordered to return to England, and forcibly transferred to a Government chartered vessel for that purpose; and for copies of the orders or correspondence under which her deportation was carried out. Mr. Brodrick, in reply, regretted that he could not send official correspondence on any subject in answer to requests by persons not immediately concerned, and with regard to the other questions said he was unable to reply upon a matter which appeared likely to be the subject of legal proceedings.

Lord Tweedmouth was the guest of the National Liberal Club. In responding to the toast of his health, he spoke of the help which Mr. Gladstone gave him when he was Chief Liberal Whip, and went on to refer to the present position of the country, which, he said, might easily pass from the stage of anxiety to that of danger. He believed there was a general feeling that the country would be all the better for a change of Government.

Speaking at Oldham, Mr. Emmott, M.P., said that to convince the country that the Liberal party was fit to take the place of the present Government unity was necessary, but although some advance towards unity was made at Derby it would not be obtained by suddenly passing amendments which had not been thoroughly digested by those present.—Mr. J. Compton Rickett, M.P., in a speech at Scarborough said that although we could not possibly restore the independence of the Dutch Republics there was surely a policy saner than that of unconditional surrender with "a good time coming." If South Africa were to continue an integral part of the Empire, it could only do so with that political freedom which knew distinction neither of race nor of religion.—Mr. W. H. Holland, M.P., speaking at Walkden, suggested that the time had come when the Boers might be inclined to accept the inevitable and to ask for the appointment of such an umpire as Lord Rosebery or Lord Cromer. It was a request, he thought, that the Government would not refuse.—Mr. Cripps, M.P., at the Manchester Conservative Club, dealt with the importance which would attach to the questions of Parliamentary procedure and education when they were brought before the House of Commons next Session.—Mr. G. Whiteley, M.P., at Farsley, near Leeds, said that the present Leader was the only prominent politician on the Liberal side who could weld the party into one great whole, and he would unhesitatingly support him.—Mr. Walter Runciman has accepted the invitation of the Liberal party in the Borough of Dewsbury to become their candidate at the coming Parliamentary election.

A meeting was held to-day in the Manchester Town Hall to aid the establishment of a medical scholarship in India to be held by a Native Christian woman. The foundation of the scholarship is intended as a memorial of Queen Victoria from the Mothers' Union.

A new system of advanced fortified bases from which mounted troops act unhampered by transport was reported to have been adopted with success in the Orange River Colony.

The War Office issued the usual monthly statement of casualties in the field force in South Africa reported during and up to the month of November. The statement shows the total reduction of the military forces through the war to be as follows:—Deaths in South Africa, 893 officers and 17,455 men; missing and prisoners, seven officers and 521 men; invalids sent home who have died, seven officers and 443 men; invalids sent home who have left the service as unfit, 4,145 men; making a total of 907 officers and 22,564 men, and an aggregate total of 23,471.

SATURDAY, December 7.—Major-General Sir H. C. Chermside was appointed Governor of Queensland, in succession to Lord Lamington.

At Bolsover, near Chesterfield, Earl Grey said he believed the crisis in British industry was largely caused by the restriction of output, a system honestly and strongly advocated by men having the confidence of the working class with the view of diminishing the number of unemployed. It was obvious, however, that a nation whose workers conspired to do as little as possible could not hope to compete with a nation whose workers were trying to do their best. The remedy was not the abolition of trade unions, but he believed that the trade unionists who invited men to restrict their output were the worst enemies this country had.—At the annual meeting of the Milnrow Reform Club, Mr. Philip Stanhope said that public opinion in this country had been misled by a cheap, vulgar, halfpenny Press which had disseminated falsehood, excited the people, and hustled them into war. The first thing the Liberal party should insist on was the sending of a Special Commissioner to South Africa to arrange terms of peace.

A Pretoria telegram, referring to the high death-rate in the concentration camps, said a feeling is growing that "some other mode of disposing of the inhabitants of the country is advisable, alike in their interests and ours." To this a London message adds that officials at home are of the same opinion, and it is said that the Government will shortly announce a departure from the present method. The suggestion is that an attempt will be made to prevent the spread of infection by distributing the occupants of the camps over such areas as can be considered settled.—The continued imprisonment of the staff of a Dutch ambulance, who are alleged to have violated neutrality, was the subject of a debate in the Second Chamber of the Dutch States General.

The New South Wales Industrial Arbitration Bill has passed through all its stages. It is regarded in Sydney as the most resolute and consistent attempt yet made to deal with disputes between capital and labour.

MONDAY, December 9.—Speaking at Crewe, the Earl of Onslow, Under-Secretary for the Colonies, said that the management of the concentration camps had now been taken over from the military authorities by the civil authority under the Colonial Office, and no pains or money would be spared to put them in the most efficient and healthy condition possible.—At a public meeting held at Disley, in the Knutsford division, a resolution was adopted deploring and condemning the policy of the Government in South Africa both in its spirit and its methods.—Sir James Ferguson, M.P., at Newton Heath, defended the conduct of the war by the Government and the administration of the concentration camps.

The General Committee of the Bodmin Division Liberal Association adopted the recommendation of the Executive that Mr. Leonard Courtney should be invited to address the delegates with a view to his adoption as the candidate at the next election.

The "Manchester Guardian" learnt by special telegram that Mr. Carnegie was understood to contemplate making an immediate gift of £2,000,000 to the American nation for the purpose of founding a National University at Washington—"a central institution free from religious or political control, where the American youth may obtain higher education with the use of the Government's scientific and literary collections."

TUESDAY, December 10.—The King in Council signed proclamations fixing the Coronation for June 26 next, and proroguing Parliament till Thursday, January 16.

It was announced that the proclamation of the King as Emperor of India will take place at Delhi on January 1, 1903, with a full State ceremonial, in presence of the Viceroy and of all the Indian Princes.

Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, addressing his constituents at Dunfermline, asked if we were any nearer now than a year ago to a stable and equitable settlement in South Africa, or were we blindly drifting into a less favourable position? The strong desire of the British people, he said, was not for more territory or military glory, but for a safe and generous peace. He spoke of the necessity of a man like the late Lord Elgin going out to South Africa, and in connexion with the name of Lord Milner suggested that officials were the servants and not the masters of the nation. Speaking afterwards at a supper, Sir Henry intimated that he had taken a stronger line on the war than he otherwise would have done because the reservations of Mr. Asquith and Sir E. Grey at the Reform Club meeting left him greater freedom to say what he thought fit.

WEDNESDAY, December 11.—Mr. Brodrick, at Glasgow, said the Boer leaders were the best witnesses to the fact that the Government was not lethargic in the conduct of the war. The bandits now representing the Boer cause would soon reach a stage when they could no longer be treated as belligerents. The Government were for no half measures in the settlement, and any fresh overtures must come from the other side.—Sir Edward Grey, at Bristol,

said the public still firmly held that the war must be carried to a successful conclusion, but the Government had grown stale. He dissented from the views of the National Liberal Federation, criticised the mismanagement of the concentration camps, and held it would be disastrous to recall Lord Milner.

Lord Kitchener reported that General Bruce Hamilton had captured practically the whole of the Bethel commando at Trichardsfontein. Seven Boers were killed, and 131 taken prisoners.

Sir G. S. Clarke, the new Governor of Victoria, arrived in Melbourne and took the oath of office.

THE FAMINE IN INDIA.

OUTLOOK STILL GLOOMY.

The Secretary of State for India has received the following telegram from the Viceroy, dated December 7:—

Good rain has fallen in Madras; elsewhere prospects unaltered. Test works being opened in South Punjab districts, where, however, wandering in search of work is reported to be decreasing. There has been a considerable fall of prices in Bombay Deccan, where they are from 14 to 17 seers per rupee; they are still lower in Gujerat. Numbers in receipt of relief:—Bombay, 42,000; Bombay Native States, 20,000; Baroda, 27,000; Mysore, 2,000; total, 91,000.

"ACUTE FAMINE."

The "Christian" (Dec. 5) publishes an extract from a letter from the Rev. Dennis Osborne, the well-known missionary at Poona. Mr. Osborne writes (Nov. 8):—

In some parts famine has already developed. The "Deccan Herald" states that famine is impending in Behar on account of the failure of rains. The bhadoi crops are almost ruined, and the prospects of the rabi crops are very gloomy. The localities indicated are in Bengal, and are among the most densely-populated sections. This dearth cannot but affect millions. A still more urgent cry comes from the North-West. Rev. J. C. Lawson writes to the effect that in a large section of country acute famine prevails. Here, in Poona, a severe recrudescence of plague is laying the inhabitants low. Our streets are becoming deserted, and the people are fleeing from their homes.

"AS BAD AS IN 1899."

The same journal also publishes the following extract from a letter from the Rev. J. Sinclair Stevenson, of the Irish Mission, Paranti:—

Having just returned to India after a few months at home, it has come upon me with a shock to find what a serious state of things prevails in the northern half at least of the Bombay Presidency, the district occupied by the Irish Presbyterian Mission to which I belong. Over large tracts of country we are face to face with famine conditions as bad as in 1899. This is no mere private view, but the deliberately expressed opinion of Government officials in the districts concerned. These include, among others, the Bhil country, the northern States of Gujerat, and practically the whole of Kathiawar. Although the rainy season is only just over, the water has almost disappeared from the tanks and all but the larger rivers. The danger of a water famine seems much greater than in 1899. This would be likely to greatly increase the mortality arising from pestilence and sickness, such as always accompanies famine, beside making it more difficult to make suitable arrangements.

A CANADIAN VIEW.

The "Toronto Mail" (Nov. 16) writes:—The few English newspapers which give any attention to Indian affairs are calling on the Lord Mayor to re-open his Famine Fund, and asking if Lord George Hamilton is going to make a start upon the proposed enquiry into the causes and the prevention of famine. Famine in India threatens to become chronic, notwithstanding the forecast of the Famine Commission that this season would see the end of it. The prospect, as represented in the Viceroy's latest telegrams, is anything but reassuring, and the fact that the crops will be short in a part of the Central Provinces, in the Benares district, in the Punjab, and even in Gujerat, "the garden of India," proves to us that we cannot afford to rest and be hopeful that the worst is over. The friends of India are trusting that Lord Curzon, the most sympathetic as well as ablest Viceroy of recent years, will make his period of office for ever memorable by instituting a wholesale enquiry into the causes and the prevention of poverty in the Indian villages. The Government and the Secretary of State here will be too much engrossed in other troubles to take any vigorous action, but the Viceroy may check the "drain" upon India's resources, and establish a juster system of taxation and promote works for the permanent uplifting of the poor, and thus he will be rendering to the Empire and our Imperialism a greater service than even Lord Kitchener or Lord Milner himself.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR.

"MR. HYNDMAN'S INDICTMENT."

To the Editor of "India."

Sir,—I have already had occasion in another place to demur to statements made by Mr. Hyndman as to the condition of India; and, though his letters quoted by you on p. 272 of your last issue are much more moderate than usual, there are still, in my opinion, obvious mis-statements in them which should not be allowed to pass unchallenged.

I am almost as uneasy as Mr. Hyndman can be about what he calls the "huge economic tribute" or "drain" from India to England; but, as I have already pointed out in reply to a letter of his in a paper then called "Democracy" and now "Ethics," it is an exaggeration to say that the whole of the "drain" is "without commercial return," because part of it, at any rate, represents insurance against foreign invasion and internal dissension.

Mr. Hyndman, indeed, as I remember, said he thought any amount of war and anarchy was better for India than being bled to death; and, of course, it is a fair question whether she does not pay too much for insurance. I quite think she does, but that is no reason for overstating the case, as Mr. Hyndman does; and to say that the whole of this tribute is disbursed in England "on Government account alone" is clearly unjustifiable, and only calculated to create an unfair prejudice, if even part of it represents insurance fairly payable by the people of India for such peace as they have probably never enjoyed since their history began.

I am also as much opposed to the salt tax as anyone can be, but I object to it "in toto": it is not the amount of the tax that is so objectionable, but the mere existence of a tax requiring an army of hungry officials to protect and collect it. As a matter of fact, though it has been raised in some parts of India, it has been lowered in others, and it is certainly not nearly so oppressive generally as it used to be. In former days the cost of carriage added enormously to its cost inland. Now-a-days, railways, whatever else they may have done or failed to do, have at any rate equalised the price of salt (and grain) all over the country, and it is not so much the price of salt that is oppressive anywhere now as the existence of a tax which involves such irritating prosecutions for the most trivial and artificial offences. It is so exceedingly cheap to begin with that even a duty of 1,000 per cent. "ad valorem" (if it is so much) does not make the price of it at all prohibitive, and such arguments as Mr. Hyndman's on this point are the merest clap-trap.

It would appear from para. 5 of his letter of the 26th ult. that he still clings to his long-exploded idea that famines are confined to British territory. Indeed, he is obliged to do so, because it is his mêtier to prove that they are the direct result of British maladministration; but, unfortunately for him, it is not true, so that we must seek elsewhere for the causes of famine.

I will not discuss the question of population referred to in para. 9, but there again Mr. Hyndman is misleading, because it is the population of the Native States and NOT that of British India that has decreased materially during the last 10 years. Mr. Rees, on p. 5 of the "Asiatic Quarterly Review" for July, says there was a falling off of 4.34 per cent. in Native States counterbalanced by an INCREASE of 4.44 in British India; and in Madras, where it is the fashion with Mr. Hyndman and others to speak of poverty as widespread, and taxation excessive, there was an increase of 7.4 per cent. Does Mr. Hyndman question the accuracy of these figures?

I fancy the 28,000 Englishmen who receive more than Rs. 1,000 a year must include everyone in the army with a salary of 80 odd rupees a month; but as there are few Natives in the higher ranks of the army it is a misleading comparison and it would have been better to compare civilians only. As it is, the comparison is certainly calculated to mislead.—Yours truly,

J. B. Pennington.

December 9, 1901.

MR. DADABHAI NAOROJI AT DULWICH.

At a meeting of the East Dulwich Liberal and Radical Association on Tuesday evening, at their rooms in Lordship Lane, Mr. A. J. C. Fabritius in the chair, Mr. Naoroji delivered a lecture on the Indian question. The subject, he said, must become of vital importance before long. The condition of India, in view of its connexion with Great Britain, was not as satisfactory as many people believed. The public ignorance of the realities of the question was very great indeed. It was supposed that great blessings and vast beneficence had been the fruit of British rule. No doubt a certain amount of good had accrued to India, and an illustration of that was found in the fact that he was able to stand before them that night, and, speaking in their own language, to tell them the real facts about India. That was in truth freedom of speech. They had freedom of the Press as well as of speech, although unfortunately some of their rulers, forgetting

their British instincts, tried at times to withhold it. The Natives of India appreciated the advantages of British rule, but the misfortune was that those advantages were largely counterbalanced by existent evils incident to the system—evils which ought not to prevail. It was quite within the power of the authorities to carry on a system of Government which would be beneficial to both countries. He was not making complaint against individual officials: his charge was levelled against the system of government, not against the British people or their desires. The system had from the beginning been based upon evil and upon greed. When the British first obtained political power in India—in Bengal and Behar—the whole aim of everyone was to make money, either by corruption or by oppression, as quickly as possible, and to return to England to spend it. The corruption was so marked that even the Court of Directors complained most bitterly about it. Then a change was brought about, and instead of public servants being permitted to supplement their poor wages by plundering the Natives, very high salaries were granted to them and they were made honest. But the result to the poor Indian was just the same. In the one case there was open oppression: in the other it was silent oppression. In 1787, Sir John Shore, a high official who eventually became Governor-General, reported on the evils of the system of government then prevailing, and said:—

> Whatever allowance we may make for the increased industry of the subject and the State, owing to the enhanced demand for the produce of it (supposing the demand to be enhanced), there is reason to conclude that the benefits are more than counterbalanced by evils inseparable from the system of a remote foreign dominion.

The words "foreign dominion" were the key to the whole secret. Before the British established themselves in India, the country was subject to invasions, the participators in which on each occasion carried away a large amount of booty. But at the end of the invasion there was an end of the plundering, and the country had time to recuperate. The same thing had occurred in Europe in quite recent times, for when in 1870 Germany invaded France she inflicted a heavy pecuniary penalty upon her. But the wound had since been allowed to heal. France had had time to recuperate, and had become as wealthy as ever. But the case of India was vastly different. The British invasion was everlasting; it had been going on for 150 years; daily, monthly, and yearly, the amount of booty taken out of the country was increasing. At the beginning of the century the annual drain from India was estimated at from three to five millions sterling. Now it was calculated that the amount of booty carried away from India in a hundred different shapes was nearly 30 millions. What chance was there of the healing of that bleeding wound? None at all. England, wealthy as she was, would soon be reduced to poverty were she subjected to so fearful a drain. India had thus been deprived of thousands of millions. Mr. Montgomery Martin, so far back as 1834, was able to lay his hands upon the report of a Government enquiry into the condition of the people of Behar and Bengal, which was held between 1809-1816. That report, which like so many valuable documents had simply been pigeon-holed, stated that India as a country was one of the richest in the world, but her people were the poorest. In 1834 Mr. Montgomery Martin, calculating the annual drain at from three to five millions, said that India's loss for the benefit of England in only thirty years represented—with the ordinary interest added—fully a thousand millions. How much more serious was the loss now that the outgoing was 30 millions annually! As Mr. Montgomery Martin declared three-quarters of a century ago, such a condition of affairs, if applied to England, would reduce her to poverty in a very short period.

But the evil did not end there. This country was waging war in the Transvaal, and pouring out money from its exchequer in order to cover the cost. In India many wars had had to be conducted, and by means of them the British Indian Empire had been built up. They had cost millions upon millions; yet not a farthing of the burden had been borne by England; it had all been taken from the Indian revenue. And not only had the British Empire in India been formed and maintained at the expense of the Indian taxpayers—who, as a reward, were kept under heel like helots—but they had been compelled to spend their blood as well. At the time of the Mutiny, in the '50's, the average number of British soldiers in India was 35,000. The Indian army numbered 250,000 men, and it was that army which had suffered the chief losses in the wars by which the Indian Empire had been formed. Was it a matter for surprise then that India was the poorest country in the world, and that it was constantly growing poorer; that the famines were increasing in intensity, and that even in good seasons scores of millions had an insufficiency of food, with the result that they died of starvation directly a famine set in? Anglo-Indians were fond of boasting of the great blessings conferred on India by British rule, but to suggest that India was prosperous as a result of 150 years of British rule was most extraordinary. Lord Salisbury, when Secretary of State for India, admitted that one of the chief evils of the system of government was that a large amount of produce went out of the country without India receiving any equivalent in either merchandise or money. They had the whole story in a nutshell when they had Lord Salisbury admitting that India must thus be bled. Every year upwards of 200 millions of rupees were taken from India before the poor agriculturist could enjoy a single ounce of his produce. The economic condition of India might well be illustrated by certain physical phenomena. There were large oceans the world over. Every year a certain amount of water was evaporated and formed clouds which burst over the land showering fertility upon it. Through the channels of the rivers it eventually returned to the ocean, and thus they had a complete circle. But suppose instead of the water returning altogether it totally disappeared. Would not the ocean in time dry up? Yet that was exactly how India was suffering; the circle was broken; the produce she sent abroad did not in any form come back; so impoverishment was steadily proceeding and eventually the catastrophe must come. No great depth of philosophy was required to understand the Indian problem. How could the British conscience allow this evil system to continue? Why not adopt a method which would be beneficial to both countries alike?

Not only did the British authorities thus plunder India, but they had acted and were acting dishonourably towards the Native races. Englishmen were proud of their honour; they always boasted that a promise once made by them was fulfilled under any circumstances and irrespective of consequences, but somehow in their conduct towards India both honour and honesty seemed to evaporate. In 1833 the principle was laid down, after an exhaustive debate in Parliament, that in the Government of India Indian subjects should be treated as British subjects—there was in fact to be no distinction of race, creed, or colour, in the employment of Indians in her Majesty's service. (Hear.) Had that pledge been carried out he would not be there that day complaining in the bitter manner he was doing. That was their first charter of emancipation: they were no longer to be treated as helots, but they were to have admission to the public service according to merit and not according to race, colour, or creed. The promise had been made: it had never been fulfilled. In 1853 the Charter was renewed, but still effect was never given to it. Then came the Mutiny, which was due to the action of the Government, and which was suppressed largely by the aid of the Indian people. Again, at its close, the Queen issued a Proclamation declaring that no distinction should be made among her subjects in regard to race, colour, or creed, and that her Indian subjects should be treated exactly the same as all her British subjects. The Indians spent their money and shed their blood in order to continue the British connexion, and to secure for themselves the enjoyment of British citizenship. In 1877, on her Majesty's assumption of the title of Empress of India, and in 1887, on the occasion of the Jubilee, these pledges were renewed in the most solemn words, and had they only been fulfilled the Indian people would have been satisfied, and the Indian Empire would have been one such as had never existed before. But the promise to the ear had been broken to the heart. Great British statesmen had admitted the failure to fulfil these pledges, although small instalments of justice were granted by Sir Stafford Northcote (who admitted a certain proportion of Natives to the Civil Service), and by Mr. Gladstone, who laid down the principle that Great Britain should contribute some share of the cost of the Indian frontier wars. He appealed to Englishmen to carry out the policy that they themselves had laid down, to no longer continue their unjust treatment, especially in financial matters, and to remember that after all their Empire in the East was being maintained solely and entirely in their own interest.

The prime evil was the heavy expenditure imposed on India; seeing that money was spent in the British interest, let Britons pay at least a fair share of it. But the Indians asked more than that. They would like to have some interest in the British connexion, and they claimed therefore some voice in the government of their country. It was not right that the burden should be entirely borne by one country and the benefit solely by the other. (Hear.) It was sometimes said that he was in the habit of bringing a strong indictment against this country and against the system of British Government in India, but he would ask them did not the facts he had cited prove that Great Britain had been plundering and bleeding India and acting dishonourably towards her by breaking the solemn promises and pledges repeatedly made? In Nature there was always something like a Nemesis. The laws of Nature were elastic, but the time arrived when the cord, if unduly stretched, must snap. Did the English people intend to allow the present state of things to continue until the chord snapped, or would they awaken and rouse their servants to a sense of their duty; would they see that their promises were fulfilled and thus earn the blessings of 300 millions of Indian men and women? (Cheers.)

Replying subsequently to a number of questions, Mr. Naoroji compared the taxation per head in Great Britain with that in India, and took the opportunity to correct a statement made by Sir Henry Fowler to the effect that the Indian paid only a twentieth of the taxes which fell upon the Englishman. In England it was true the taxation represented £2 1s. 8d. per head per year, in Scotland £2 8s. 1d., and in Ireland £1 12s. 5d., while in India it was only 2s. 6d., but on the othe rhand, the annual income of the Englishman averaged £40 per head as against the 50s. which was the average in India, and thus in proportion the Indian paid 12 per cent. on his taxable capacity compared with the 6 per cent. imposed in England. More than that, the ability to bear the taxation decreased proportionately with the fall in income: the poorer the man the less able was he to pay the tax, however small. The figures relied upon by Sir Henry Fowler, too, did not show the full facts, for in reality the Indian agriculturist was taxed to the extent of 15 per cent. of his wretched income—an income which had steadily decreased under British rule. It had been proved that famines were now becoming more frequent and of greater intensity despite the fact that there were improved means of transport by which grain could be promptly carried to the places where it was most needed. The truth was that the Indian had no money with which to buy it, and so he starved. Asked as to the remedy, Mr. Naoroji insisted on the importance of giving the Indians a voice in their own government, and a fairer share of the public appointments. Less money would, as a result, be annually drained from the country. But at present matters were going from bad to worse and Lord George Hamilton had sown many seeds which would bear bitter fruit in days to come. Indian people would be perfectly satisfied that only England would

honourably fulfilled her pledges. Let them stop the bleeding, and India would soon become a happy and prosperous country.

The proceedings closed with a hearty vote of thanks to the lecturer, proposed by Mr. Spray, and seconded by Ald. Seth Coward.

MR. J. M. PARIKH AT BRIXTON.

Mr. J. M. Parikh, barrister-at-law, delivered an address on "The White Man's Burden," at the Brixton Discussion Forum, Raleigh College Hall, on Sunday last (Dec. 8). Mr. G. K. Singh was in the chair. Quoting Mr. Kipling's expression "half-devil and half-child," Mr. Parikh said he did not understand the allusion, but he would explain the white man's work in India and leave his audience to form their own conclusion as to whether it was devilish or human. Mr. Kipling had forgotten that the Indians were more civilised and refined than the modern white man in days when the white man's forefathers did not know how to cook their meals and clothe their bodies, much less could even dream of civilisation. Closing with his subject, Mr. Parikh referred to the common British assertion that Britain holds India for India's good, without self-interest of her own. But in the time of the East India Company, which went to India as traders, the Indians were practically plundered by servants of the Company, who returned and set up as Nawabs in this country. One way or another the Company's servants also contrived to set up strife between the peoples, and eventually the Indian Empire came to be built up with India's blood and with India's money. When India came under the Crown, indeed, she undoubtedly received every beautiful promise she could desire, but the true question was whether these promises had been fulfilled in practice. The answer was No. (Shame!) Mr. Parikh quoted the Proclamation of 1858, emphasising the passage: "in their prosperity will be our strength, in their contentment our security, and in their gratitude our best reward." In fact, there was but too little evidence of either prosperity or contentment: people were dying like flies through famine, and discontent was steadily increasing. Where was the moral and material progress so often and so loudly boasted of by Anglo-Indian friends? Mr. Parikh traced the present famines to the British policy in India. The Anglo-Indian argument was that famines are the acts of God; where there is no rain, there is famine. But when the crop failed, did it fail all over India? No; India is in fact a continent, and if the crop fails in one place there is enough in the other places. But even if it did fail over the whole of India, why should India suffer so seriously? How much does England herself produce in proportion to her consumption? Only one-third. Yet England does not starve. England can buy for her needs. But in India it is famine of money, not of food. The people cannot buy the necessary food because they lack the necessary money, and they lack the money because they are unable to save enough for their needs. Their taxes are heavy, in order to maintain a large number of European officials and a large army, which is kept not for the requirements of India alone but for the benefit of the whole Empire as well. Mr. Parikh appealed to the British public to wake up and inform themselves as to their "burden" in India, for the interest of Britain as well as of India.

An interesting debate followed. Mr. Parikh briefly replied, and was awarded a cordial vote of thanks for his address.

THE MAHSUD WAZIRI IMBROGLIO.

OPINIONS OF THE BRITISH PRESS.

THE "MANCHESTER GUARDIAN."

These people (the Mahsud Waziris)—and the same may be said of all the Pathan tribes— depend for their livelihood on their trade with India, and to blockade the ends of their valleys on the Indian side is therefore the strongest possible argument that can be applied to them. For months this plan has been in operation. How, then, are we to explain its apparent abandonment for the less effectual and more costly plan of a punitive expedition? The explanation seems to be that it was a political blunder made by the authorities on the frontier, unauthorised by Lord Curzon, and vetoed by him as soon as he heard of it; and this explanation is in part supported in an Exchange Company's telegram of last week. If this be so, Lord Curzon has given one more proof of his statesmanlike mastery of the Indian frontier problem. For all we know, he may have nipped another great war in the bud. He was right in condemning, as Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs in 1898, the system of punitive expeditions; he was right, as Viceroy, in reviving the old weapon of the blockade; and he is right now in insisting that a policy adopted after mature deliberation shall not be lightly set aside and in recalling a punitive expedition that had set out. (Dec. 10.)

THE "MORNING POST."

In a country of this sort, which is all hills, crags, and gorges, the movements of troops are difficult, and have to be warily conducted. . . . . If a column moves to attack the Waziris it must return so soon as the blow has been struck, for it cannot be fed in the hills for more than a day or two. If the blow fails to hit the adversary the column must return all the same for the same inexorable reason. . . . . The new policy was to have been that of Sandeman. The Maliks were to be recognised and backed up by the British power, and the Maliks in return were to keep the tribesmen in order. Apparently no clear agreement has ever been reached with the Maliks of the Mahsud Waziris, and they have not been supported. Instead of a clear policy firmly carried out there seems to have been for some years an unsettled policy with waverings in the execution. The order to concentrate a reserve brigade followed by the counter-order not to concentrate it is a sample of such wavering, due no doubt to want of complete harmony between the local and the central Government, but none the less likely to have a bad effect on the Pathans of this part of the borderland. The recent history of the dealings with the Waziris is puzzling mainly because little information on the subject has been vouchsafed to the public at home. The defect will, no doubt, be made good as soon as Parliament meets. But the present deadlock, it can hardly be denied, is only what was to be expected from the half-hearted declarations of policy made on the termination of the Tirah campaign. Are the Pathans regarded as the King's subjects or not? Neither they themselves nor the public at home have a clear idea on this essential point. (Dec. 10.)

THE "MORNING ADVERTISER."

Everyone understands how essential it is that the tribesmen should not get encouraged in the idea that they can defy the Government of India with impunity, but when it is remembered how costly and useless punitive expeditions have often proved it is much to be hoped that the wise handling of frontier difficulties which has often saved a situation may once again be effective. . . . Prestige can be maintained without military undertakings which constitute an enormous financial strain eminently undesirable under existing circumstances, and Lord Curzon can be trusted to gauge the requirements of the case with accuracy. (Dec. 7.)

THE "MORNING LEADER."

Waziristan is not—or at any rate is not yet—in India, but it is a country beyond that North-West frontier where Anglo-Indian Russophobes in search of decorations have always been able to discover cause for military intervention. . . . . What does it (the present difficulty) all mean? The question should be addressed to Sir Henry Fowler, who, when he was Secretary for India, sanctioned the Waziri expedition in defiance of the opinion of the ablest non-military members of the Viceroy's Council. Great secrecy, it will be remembered, was observed at the time. Indeed, there is reason to believe that Sir H. Fowler's colleagues in the Cabinet were kept in the dark. But on the day before the opening of Parliament for the Session of 1898, when it was known that the Liberal Opposition was about to attack the "forward" policy in Chitral, Lord George Hamilton issued two Blue-books purporting to give a general review of operations beyond the North-West frontier, and beginning, neatly enough, with Sir Henry Fowler's adventures in Waziristan. Among these papers was the dissenting Minute recorded by Sir Charles Pritchard, Sir James Westland, and Sir Antony MacDonnell—members of the Viceroy's Council—at the time when Sir Henry Fowler sanctioned the Waziri expedition. [We quote the essential points elsewhere.] It might have been expected that a warning of this kind would carry weight with a Liberal Secretary of State. But it was ignored. Sir Henry Fowler had already offered himself—a willing sacrifice—to "those of our civil and military officers who are eager for an advance." The result is what we see. Sir Charles Pritchard, Sir James Westland, and Sir Antony MacDonnell were perfectly right, and the policy of aggression which was pursued in spite of their warning has secured that from that day to this there have been only brief intervals of tranquillity in Waziristan. (Dec. 9.)

THE "STAR."

Waziristan is not in India. It is a country beyond the North-West Frontier. Why are we meddling with it? Sir Henry Fowler is the only man who can give an authoritative answer. For it was he who, when Secretary for India, sanctioned the Waziri Expedition in defiance of the opinion of the ablest non-military members of the Viceregal Council. . . . . Sir Henry Fowler ignored this weighty advice. He disregarded the pacific counsels of his civilian advisers, and threw himself into the arms of the ambitious military clique which is the bane of India. His aggressive policy is now bearing fruit. . . . . The truth is that the Waziris like to be let alone, and if Sir Henry Fowler had taken the advice of his more sensible advisers, they would not now be in arms against our raiding columns.

A PARSI DISTRICT COUNCIL CHAIRMAN.

Mr. Nowrojee Dadabhoy Allbless, B.A., LL.B. (Cantab.), barrister-at-law, a scion of a well-known Parsi family of Bombay, has just been elected chairman of the Hampton District Council. The racial antagonism—or, let us say British "patriotism"—was pointedly manifested by the outgoing chairman; but the good sense and feeling of the members promptly extinguished the unfortunate outburst. We take the following from the "Surrey Comet" (Dec. 7):—

Captain Christie said he should have much pleasure in supporting the election of Mr. Allbless. His legal knowledge would make him a useful chairman.

Mr. Sanders: Above all things your chairman should be an Englishman. (Oh, oh, and Shame.)

Mr. Evans: Mr. Allbless is a British subject, and many of his race have stood shoulder to shoulder with our soldiers.

Mr. Draper: It is a scandalous remark to make of Mr. Allbless.

Mr. Bloxham: He is a gentleman and has always acted as such. (Hear, hear.)

The motion for the appointment of Mr. Allbless was then put and carried. Messrs. Rose and Sherwood voting against, and Mr. Sanders not voting.

Mr. Allbless, in returning thanks for his election, dealt with the attack in the right spirit:—

He asked for the support and confidence of his colleagues, without which it would be impossible for him to hope to succeed. It had been said that he was not an Englishman. He wanted to

say that his forefathers and himself were loyal British subjects, and as loyal as any man born in Canada or Australia. India was the land of his birth, England the land of his adoption, where he hoped to spend the remainder of his days, and he claimed to be a son of the Empire. (Hear, hear.) I have no ill-will, he concluded, against my friend who made that remark, but I want to say that I have as much right to a position of this kind as any Britisher, or any subject of the Empire.

The "Surrey Comet," too, in its editorial comments on the election, strikes the right note:—

Mr. Sanders has been a good chairman . . . . but the Council has selected in Mr. Allbless a gentleman of undoubted capacity, knowledge of affairs and proved interest in the welfare of the district, and we cannot doubt that he will do his utmost to justify the choice of his colleagues. Mr. Allbless is an Indian by birth, though an Englishman by adoption, and it is to the credit of the Hampton Council that they found this no bar to his occupancy of the chair, but on the contrary did not scruple to award him the dignity to which in their opinion his public record and great abilities entitled him.

We abridge our local contemporary's account of Mr. Allbless's distinguished career:—

Mr. Allbless belongs to a leading and well-known Parsi family in Bombay, who have lived in Bombay for over a century. His grandfather and father and uncles carried on a large mercantile and banking business in Bombay and China for half a century, and were owners of several large sailing vessels before the era of steam vessels. Mr. Allbless was born in Bombay in June, 1860, and having received a thorough education at school he joined the Elphinstone College and passed his examinations at the University of Bombay. After finishing his university career he was articled to a firm of Government solicitors in Bombay, Messrs. Smith and Frere. He served his articles for five years, and then came to England in April, 1885, and entered at once as a student at the Middle Temple, London; and joined Caius College, Cambridge, in October of the same year. In May, 1888, he successfully passed the Law Tripos, and received the degrees of B.A. and LL.B. In June, 1888, he was called to the Bar at the Middle Temple. For several years he practised at the Privy Council Bar in appeal cases from India. Since leaving Cambridge University in June, 1888, Mr. Allbless has resided in this neighbourhood, first for six years at Teddington, and in Hampton since 1895. Although two Parsis have had the honour of being Members of Parliament, this is the first instance of a Parsi gentleman being elected chairman of a District Council in England. Mr. Allbless was elected a member of the Hampton Urban District Council in March, 1899, by a large majority, heading the list of the successful candidates in that year. Sir M. M. Bhownaggree, M.P., is married to a second cousin of Mr. Allbless.

THE DISMISSAL OF MR. PENNELL.

HIS REPLY TO HIS OFFICIAL ACCUSERS.

(*Continued from page 203.*)

From the charge based upon these events I have already defended myself. I may add that my sister's affidavit was sworn at Alipur, but that Mr. Pargiter, the District Judge there, refused to allow the affidavits of the clerks to be sworn, on the ground that they reflected on the Chief Justice! These affidavits, in the clerk's own hand, are now in my possession, and copies of them are enclosed (Enclosures F and G). I would respectfully ask his Lordship to read them for himself, and form his own opinion as to whether there was any justification for Mr. Pargiter's refusal. If a plain and unvarnished statement of the Chief Justice's acts reflects upon the Chief Justice, I submit that it is the Chief Justice's fault and not mine: apparently Mr. Pargiter thinks the Chief Justice may do these things, but that no one is to be allowed to say so.

His Lordship will now, I submit, be able to comprehend the Chief Justice's actual position. In endeavouring to cover up the traces of one blunder he had made another: several people already knew the facts, and I was rushing about Calcutta to file affidavits divulging them.

Still, if the record could be got out of my hands and I myself bundled off to Noakhali there was yet a possibility of escape. . . . . So apparently after the refusal of the affidavits by the District Registrar, the Criminal Bench were moved to demand the record "forthwith," the Sessions Statement was hunted up, a letter issued with such haste that it was neither correctly copied nor sealed, and Registrar and ex-Registrar despatched with it hot-foot.

Instead however of bringing the record, they brought back to the Criminal Bench and the Chief Justice the unwelcome information that I was off to file affidavits at Alipur. Things were getting worse and worse. So the Chief Justice hastily convened the Judges, and got a majority of them to recommend my suspension, which was carried out forthwith. He could not afford to give me a hearing, for then the very reason for suspending me would have been removed by my divulging his own conduct. He, therefore, applied his majority to the question and so closed the argument.

From the point of view of the Executive authorities, my suspension was a fatal step—for it at once showed the High Court's hand. But from Sir Francis Maclean's point of view it was a necessity. And Sir John Woodburn and Lord Curzon dared not go against his wishes, seeing that they looked to him to help them out later on in the main case. And so I was suspended—and peremptorily ordered, without reason given, and indeed without any reason which could be given, to return to Noakhali "at once."

The Chief Justice, I imagine, thought that I would be cowed by the order of suspension and would comply with the order of return. The only result of the first order however upon my mind was to deprive me of any reason for obeying the second. If Government will not employ me it can be no concern of theirs whether I am in one place or another—by suspending me they turned a pawn into a knight. At all events, the morning of the 5th March found me still in Calcutta: while the Chief Justice's position was not improved by the publication of the affidavits in the "Amrita Bazar Patrika" of that date.

It was my intention to swear an affidavit of my own setting forth all the circumstances, and to make an official application supported by this and the other affidavits, to the Registrar, that I might obtain the High Court's orders as to what I should do with the record. Being a private person I no longer had any concern with this latter, but it was on my hands and I wanted to utilize the opportunity which its delivery would afford me of explaining my position. On the 5th March, however, all the Courts were closed, so I could do nothing either in the way of swearing affidavits or of making over the record.

Early on the morning of the 6th March I went to Mr. P. L. Roy's to get him to draft my affidavit for me. The draft was nearly finished when a gentleman came and called away Mr. Roy for a moment. Mr. Roy returned and told me that the Judges were going to meet as soon as the Court sat and resolve to arrest me on a charge of contempt in not making over the record. He urged me to improve my position by making it over before they could do anything. He gave me breakfast and I went to the hotel, picked up my clerks and the record, and proceeded to the Registrar's room at the High Court which I reached about 10.35 a.m. I at once began making over the record—as it was. Owing to its state it was not till past twelve that Mr. Sheepshanks could give me any receipt at all—and he was then only able to give me a provisional receipt, which contained a promise that the usual receipt would follow.

The Judges, to get to the room where they hold general meetings, have to pass through the Registrar's room. I had not been long there when they began to assemble—first, four going in together, then others coming in one or two at a time. Sir Francis Maclean was one of the last. Not long afterwards the Judges began to disperse. . . . . Even the Press communique concerning my suspension which Government, to pave the way for their contemplated coup d'etat, had sent to the leading English (but to none of the Native) papers on the night of the 5th, failed of its full effect—for the "Indian Daily News" of the 6th, as already stated, only published it as the "official version" of the facts, and my own side of the case was in the "Statesman" of the 7th.

If Sir Francis Maclean could have got the High Court to take judicial action against me, anything which I might have said would have been discredited, nor would have there been any necessity for the Local Government to frame charges against me or give me a hearing. As it was . . . . day by day it dawned more clearly upon an astonished public that the High Court had departed from the elementary principles of national justice by condemning a man unheard, while the key to the whole was supplied on the 11th March by the publication of the Chief Justice's telegram. The Local Government could not frame any charges against me, because they knew that they had no charges against me which would stand; that the charge on which I was suspended is sustainable, it was left to the Government of India to discover. The Government of Bengal and the Government of India found themselves derided by the Native and denounced by the English Press: every day made their position worse: and it was impossible that the facts could permanently be kept from his Lordship's knowledge.

The proper course for the Executive to have taken, I would submit to his Lordship, when they saw, as they must have seen, at a very early stage, that my suspension was indefensible, was to re-instate me, but this would have been an admission that they had done wrong, and as I submit the Chupra case has shown European officials in India are very unwilling to admit they have done wrong—they are far more likely to attempt to cover up the first wrong by additional wrongs.

And I submit for his Lordship's consideration that it is this which has led them to draw up against me these general charges, covering my whole life, to discover after sixteen years that I have all along been incompetent, devoid of ability, a monster of malevolence and malice, of an uncontrolled and vindictive temper, with a mind diseased by suspicion and deluded by a morbid and malignant vanity. I submit that if there is one thing more than another apparent on the face of these proceedings, it is not that I am unable to keep my temper, but that my accusers and judges have lost theirs. And I would humbly represent that it is rather hard that because they have lost their temper I should be turned out of the Service without a penny.

(*To be continued.*)

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